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Choice of Raborn to Head CIA Ended Long Search for Talent

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President Johnson's selection of Vice Adm. William F. Raborn Jr. to be director of the Central Intelligence Agency ended one of the longest talent searches of the Johnson Administration and was primarily the work of talent scout John W. Macy Jr.

Like a number of other Johnson appointments, it came as an almost complete surprise after many other prominent men had been mentioned for the delicate assignment.

Criticism Expected

The selection of a military man to head the CIA was expected to arouse criticism, and it has, but it likewise has stimulated applause because of Raborn's popularity in Congress and the military services and in industry.

John A. McCone, the present CIA director, a California Republican and industrialist, told the President last year of his desire to retire.

Civil Service Chairman Macy, acting as the President's chief talent scout, immediately began the search for a successor to McCone. There were a number of candidates for the post and there were some high officials considered who would have taken it but were not necessarily eager to have it.

Endorsed by McNamara

As always, the President went about the task in the greatest secrecy.

After much discussion within the Administration of all possible choices, Macy wrote

a memorandum recommending Raborn as first choice. He had the endorsement of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara.

The President knew Raborn from the days of the Senate investigation that followed the Soviet launching of the first space satellite, but he apparently did not know the admiral well.

While the Admiral is a native Texan, he moved to Oklahoma when a child and was appointed to the Naval Academy from Oklahoma. He is a close friend of House Majority Leader Carl Albert (D-Okla.).

During last year's presidential campaign, Raborn, unlike a number of other military leaders, opposed the candidacy of Barry Goldwater.

"He's just not smart enough to be President of the United

States," Raborn said of Goldwater.

A major factor in Macy's recommendation of Raborn was that a primary concern of CIA is knowledge of the development of new weapons overseas. Raborn is one of the foremost military experts on weapons development and evaluation.

Another factor is that the CIA directorship requires strong managerial talent, which Raborn demonstrated when he was chief of the Navy's Special Projects Agency, which produced the Polaris missile.

Raborn retired as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Development in September, 1963, after 39 years in uniform. He then became vice president and program manager of Aerojet-General Corp., a leading defense manufacturer. Raborn will be 60 years old in June.